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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A guide catheter comprising:

an elongated sheath having proximal end, a distal tip, and an inner channel to accommodate travel of a medical component;

a first material in the distal tip, wherein the first material is radio-opaque and echogenic; and

a second material in a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is radio-opaque.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 1, wherein the first material comprises jet-milled tungsten carbide particles.

4. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 1, wherein the distal tip is formed of a polymeric material, and the first material comprises tungsten carbide particles distributed within the polymeric material.

5. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 4, wherein the tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material in the amount of approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight.

6. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 4, wherein the tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material in the amount of approximately 73 to 74 percent by weight.

7. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 4, wherein the tungsten carbide particles have an average diameter of less than approximately 500 nanometers.

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8. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 4, wherein the tungsten carbide particles have an average diameter of less than approximately 200 nanometers.

9. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 4, wherein the sheath includes a plurality of sheath segments extending along the length of the guide catheter, and each of the plurality of sheath segments is formed of a polymeric material containing jet-milled tungsten carbide particles.

10. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 1, further comprising a reinforcing braid formed within the sheath, wherein the braid includes a plurality of strands and at least one strand of the plurality of strands forming the reinforcing braid includes a radio-opaque material.

11. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 10, wherein the radio-opaque material comprises a material selected from the group consisting of platinum iridium, gold, tantalum, platinum, and tungsten carbide.

12. (Previously presented) A guide catheter comprising:

an elongated sheath having proximal end, a distal tip, and an inner lumen sized to accommodate travel of medical components; and

a first material in the distal tip, wherein the first material is radio-opaque and echogenic, and includes jet-milled tungsten carbide particles having an average diameter of less than 500 nanometers.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 12, wherein the distal tip is formed of a polymeric material, and the first material comprises jet-milled tungsten carbide particles distributed within the polymeric material.

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15. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 14, wherein the tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material in the amount of approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight.
16. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 14, wherein the tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material in the amount of approximately 73 to 74 percent by weight.
17. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 14, wherein the tungsten carbide particles have an average diameter of less than approximately 200 nanometers.
18. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 14, wherein the sheath includes a number of sheath segments extending along the length of the guide catheter, and each of the sheath segments is formed of a polymeric material containing jet-milled tungsten carbide particles.
19. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 18, wherein the polymeric material comprises a polyether block amide.
20. (Previously presented) A guide catheter comprising:
 an elongated sheath having proximal end and a distal tip;
 a first material forming the distal tip, wherein the first material is formed of a polymeric material and jet-milled tungsten carbide particles; and
 a second material forming a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is formed of a polymeric material.
21. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 20, wherein the second material includes barium sulfate particles.

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22. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 20, wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material of the first material in an amount between approximately 40 to 75 percent by weight.

23. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 20, wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.

24. (Previously presented) A guide catheter comprising:

an elongated sheath having proximal end and a distal tip;

a first material forming the distal tip, wherein the first material is formed of a polymeric material and jet-milled tungsten carbide particles; and

a second material forming a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is formed of a polymeric material and barium sulfate particles, and wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material of the first material between approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight and have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.